

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-11, 19 and 22 are pending in this application. By the Office Action, claims 1-3, 10-11, 21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b); claims 1-5, 9-15, 20-21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a); and claims 6-8, 19 and 22 are objected to. By this Amendment, claims 1, 7, 19 and 22 are amended; and claims 6, 12-15, 20-21 and 23 are canceled. No new matter is added.

Entry of this Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because the Amendment places the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein) or places the application into better form for Appeal should an Appeal be necessary. The Amendment does not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims, does not raise the issue of new matter, and does not raise any new issues requiring additional search and/or consideration since the Amendment is directed to subject matter previously considered during prosecution. Furthermore, the amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are in response to issues raised in the Final Rejection. The amendments merely place allowable claims 6, 19 and 22 into independent form. Applicants respectfully request entry of the Amendment.

I. **Allowable Subject Matter**

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 6-8, 19 and 22 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but are otherwise allowable. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 6, and claims 19 and 22 are placed into independent form.

II. Claim Rejections

Claims 1-3, 10, 11, 21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over EP '847.

Claims 1-5, 10-11, 13-15, 20-21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over EP '847 in view of Gad. Claims 1-5 and 9-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over EP '847 in view of Gad and further in view of Weber. Because claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable claim 6, and claims 12-15 are canceled, the rejections are moot.

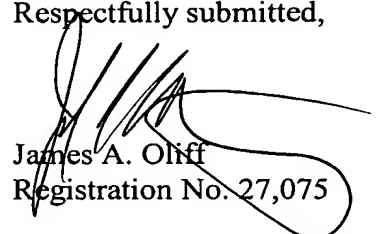
Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


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